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RESPONSE

Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

The application is directed to a water soluble package containing a detergent composition. The packaging and transport of water soluble packages containing fluid substances subjects the formed packages to considerable impact forces. A particular problem is that when a number of such packages are loose packed in a larger container which is then transported, the impact forces suffered by the packages within the container can be severe. The difficulty is that in such a situation it only takes one package in the larger container to break for the whole product to be ruined as far as the consumer is concerned because the fluid contents of the broken package may leak over any unbroken packages. Consumer confidence in a product is likely to be badly damaged by such an occurrence. The problem of minimising breakage to an acceptable level is particularly acute in the area of laundry detergents and other domestic consumer products and has not been solved until now. See page 2, line 24 - page 3, line 4 of the specification.

Applicants have surprisingly discovered that the above mentioned problems and disadvantages of known water soluble packages are substantially addressed by the packages according to the invention. In particular, the invention yields water soluble packages which are sufficiently robust to withstand (to a commercially acceptable level) the rigours of packaging and transport even when the fluid substance inside the package is a domestic consumer product such as a laundry detergent. The combination of thermoforming the packages of the invention and forming the packages into a dome shape confers surprising advantages on the packages of the invention. See page 3, line 26 - page 4, line 3 of the specification.

It is important that the body wall be thermoformed rather than cold formed because applicants have discovered that cold forming stresses the film and weakens the end package as a result. See page 4, lines 27 – 31 of the specification.

Claims 1-5 and 8-9 were rejected as being anticipated by Aasted (U.S. Patent 5,635,230). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection. The Examiner alleges that Aasted discloses sheets of thermoformed water soluble materials 21 and 23 in Figure 6a. Applicants respectfully disagree. Aasted differs from the present claim 1 and claims dependent therefrom in at least that:

- Aasted does not disclose sheets of thermoformed material;
- Aasted does not disclose sheets of materials;
- Aasted does not disclose thermoformed material.

Applicants enclose for the Examiner's interest the relevant pages of the American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language wherefrom it is clear that the prefix "thermo-" indicates pertaining to or caused by heat. By contrast, Aasted discloses cold forming. Furthermore, Aasted discloses cold forming pieces of chocolate (shells) rather than a sheet of material. In other words, the starting material of Aasted is not a sheet of water-soluble material. Rather, the chocolate shell of Aasted is the end result of his cold forming process. Thus, in Aasted disclosure there is neither a sheet of thermoformable material, nor thermoforming. Examiner's attention is called to page 4, lines 27-31 of the invention wherein applicants discuss the difference between thermoforming and cold forming. Of course, if one were to use thermoforming in Aasted's invention, one would just get melted chocolate rather than a sheet of thermoformed material, so cold rather than thermoforming is essential for Aasted.

In light of the above, it is respectfully submitted that Aasted does not disclose each and single element of the present claim 1 and claims dependent

therefrom. Consequently, it is respectfully requested that the anticipation rejection over Aasted be reconsidered and withdrawn.

Claims 1 and 5-10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Dickler et al. (U.S. Patent 6,037,319). Claims 3-4 were rejected as obvious over Dickler. Applicants respectfully traverse both rejections. Dickler does not disclose either thermoforming or dome-shaped packages. Dickler appears to address the shape and the formation of his package in a single passage at column 3, lines 24-37. Rather than teaching a dome shape of the present invention, Dickler appears to teach a rectangular form. Furthermore, there is no disclosure whatsoever of thermoforming of any sheets of any material to form a body wall of the Dickler packages. Rather, Dickler merely teaches sealing two sheets together, without mentioning thermoforming, let alone dome shape.

With respect to the obviousness rejection of claims 3-4, claims 3-4 are dependent upon claim 1 and it is not seen how one of ordinary skill in the art would have been led by Dickler to either use thermoforming or dome-shaped packets. In light of the above, it respectfully requested that the rejections over Dickler be reconsidered and withdrawn.

In light of the above remarks, it respectfully requested that the application be allowed to issue.

Applicants have requested in each of the prior responses the Examiner's acknowledgement of the consideration of documents submitted with:

- Information Disclosure Statement mailed on May 30, 2000;
- Supplemental Disclosure Statement mailed on June 8, 2000;
- Second Supplemental Disclosure Statement submitted on September 12, 2000.

A separate letter to that effect was faxed to the Examiner on December 19, 2001. A copy of that fax and the accompanying copies of Information Disclosure Statements and PTO-1449 forms are enclosed herewith. Applicants respectfully request the Examiners' acknowledgement of the consideration of these documents.

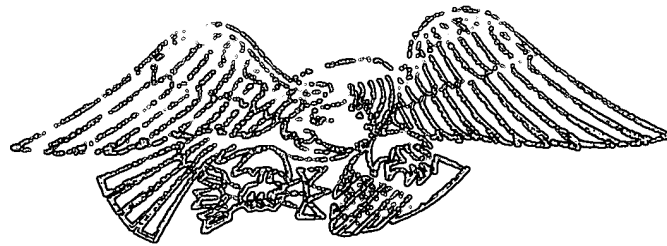
If a telephone conversation would be of assistance in advancing the prosecution of the present application, applicants' undersigned attorney invites the Examiner to telephone at the number provided.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Rimma Mitelman", written over a horizontal line.

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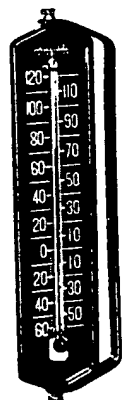
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in Maynard, Massachusetts

thermo- thick

thermo- *therm-*. Indicates pertaining to or caused by heat; for example, thermogram, thermion. [From Greek *thermē*, heat, from *thermos*, hot. See *gwher-* in Appendix.*]
thermochemical calorie. A unit of heat, a calorie (see).
thermo-chem-is-try (thū'mō-kēm'ī-strē) *n.* The chemistry of heat and heat-associated chemical phenomena. —*thermo-chem-i-cal* (-kēm'ī-kāl) *adj.* —*thermo-chem'ist n.*
thermo-cou-ple (thū'mō-kūp'əl) *n.* A thermoelectric device used to measure temperatures accurately, especially one consisting of two dissimilar metals joined so that a potential difference generated between the points of contact is a measure of the temperature difference between the points.
thermo-dynam-ics (thū'mō-dī-nām'iks) *n.* Plural in form, usually used with a singular verb. The physics of the relationships between heat and other forms of energy. —*thermo-dy-nam'ic adj.*



thermometer
Outdoor Fahrenheit thermometer

thermo-elec-tric (thū'mō-lēk'trīk) *adj.* Also *thermo-elec-tri-cal* (-trī-kāl). Characteristic of or resulting from electrical phenomena occurring in conjunction with a flow of heat. —*thermo-elec-tri-cal-ly adv.*

thermo-elec-tric-i-ty (thū'mō-lēk'trīs'ī-tē) *n.* Electricity generated by a flow of heat, as in a thermocouple.

thermo-graph (thū'mō-grāf', -grāf') *n.* A thermometer that records the temperature it indicates. [THERMO- + -GRAPH.]

thermog-ra-phy (thər-mōg'rā-fē) *n.* Printing. A process for producing raised lettering, as on stationery or calling cards, by transferring the inked lines on a plate to the paper by pressure and suction. [THERMO- + -GRAPHY.]

thermo-junc-tion (thū'mō-jūngk'shən) *n.* A point of contact between two dissimilar metals at which a thermoelectric current is produced.

thermo-la-bile (thū'mō-lā'bəl, -bīl') *adj.* Subject to destruction, decomposition, or great change by moderate heating. Said especially of certain biochemicals. Compare *thermostable*. [THERMO- + LABILE.]

thermo-lu-mi-nescence (thū'mō-lū'mā-nēs'əns) *n.* A phenomenon in which certain minerals release previously absorbed radiation upon being moderately heated.

thermo-l-y-sis (thər-mōl'ā-sīs) *n.* 1. *Physiology.* The loss of heat from the body. 2. *Chemistry.* The dissociation or decomposition of compounds by heat. [THERMO- + -LYSIS.]

thermo-m-e-ter (thər-mōm'ā-tər) *n.* An instrument for measuring temperature, especially one consisting of a graduated glass tube with a bulb containing a liquid, typically mercury, that expands and rises in the tube as the temperature increases. [French *thermomètre*: THERMO- + -METER.]

thermo-m-e-try (thər-mōm'ā-trē) *n.* 1. The measurement of temperature. 2. The technology of temperature measurement. [THERMO- + -METRY.] —*thermo-met'ric* (thū'mō-mēt'rīk) *adj.*

thermo-mo-tor (thū'mō-mō'tər) *n.* An engine operated by heat, especially by the expansion of heated air.

thermo-nu-cle-ar (thū'mō-nū'klē-ər, -nyōō'klē-ər) *adj.* 1. Of, pertaining to, or derived from the fusion of atomic nuclei at high temperatures. 2. Pertaining to atomic weapons based on fusion, especially as distinguished from those based on fission.

thermo-pe-ri-od-ism (thū'mō-pī'ē-ō-dīz'm) *n.* Also *thermo-pe-ri-od-ic-i-ty* (-dīs'ī-tē). The effect of the rhythmic fluctuation of temperature upon an organism, including responses corresponding to thermal changes due to alternation of day and night.

thermo-phil-ic (thū'mō-fīl'īk) *n.* *Biology.* Requiring high temperatures for normal development, as certain bacteria. [THERMO- + -PHILIC.]

thermo-pile (thū'mō-pīl') *n.* A device to measure temperature, consisting of a number of thermocouples connected in series. [THERMO- + PILE (a heap, "series").]

thermo-plas-tic (thū'mō-plās'tīk) *adj.* Becoming soft when heated and hardening when cooled. —*n.* A thermoplastic resin, such as polystyrene or polyethylene.

Thermop-y-lae (thər-mōp'ā-lē). A locality in eastern Greece, near Lamia, an invasion route since ancient times; most famous as the site of a heroic but unsuccessful defense by the Spartans against the Persians (480 B.C.).

thermos bot-tle (thū'mōs). A commercially produced Dewar flask. Also called "thermos." [Trademark, from THERMO-.]

thermo-set-ting (thū'mō-sēt'īng) *adj.* Permanently hardening or solidifying on being heated. Said of certain synthetic resins.

thermo-sphere (thū'mō-sfir') *n.* The outermost shell of the atmosphere, between the mesosphere and outer space, where temperatures increase steadily with altitude.

thermo-sta-ble (thū'mō-stā'bəl) *adj.* Also *thermo-sta-bil-e* (-bəl, -bīl'). Unaffected by relatively high temperatures. Compare *thermolabile*. —*thermo-sta-bil'i-ty* (-stā-bīl'ī-tē) *n.*

thermo-stat (thū'mō-stāt') *n.* A device that automatically responds to temperature changes and activates switches controlling equipment such as furnaces, refrigerators, and air conditioners. [THERMO- + -STAT.] —*thermo-stat'ic adj.*

thermo-tax-is (thū'mō-tāk'sīs) *n.* 1. The movement of a living organism in response to heat. 2. The normal regulation or adjustment of body temperature. [New Latin: THERMO- + -TAXIS.] —*thermo-tac'tic* (-tāk'tīk) *adj.*

thermo-ther-a-py (thū'mō-thēr'ā-pē) *n.* Therapy by application of heat.

thermo-trop-ism (thər-mōt'rā-pīz'm) *n.* *Biology.* Growth or movement of plants or other organisms in response to heat. [THERMO- + -TROPISM.] —*thermo-trop'ic* (thū'mō-trōp'īk) *adj.*

—*thermy*. Indicates heat; for example, diathermy. [New Latin

—*thermia*, from Greek *thermē*, heat, from *thermos*, hot. See *gwher-* in Appendix.*]

thero-pod (thī'rō-pōd') *n.* Any of various carnivorous saurs of the suborder Theropoda, of the Jurassic and Cretaceous periods, characteristically having small, toothed jaws. [New Latin *Theropoda*: Greek *thēr*, beast (see Appendix*) + -POD.] —*thero-pod'an* (thī-rōp'ō-dan) *n.*

Ther-si-tes (thər-sī'tēz). An ugly, abusive Greek soldier slain by Achilles in the Trojan War.

ther-sau-rus (thī-sōr'əs) *n.*, *pl.* -sauri (-sōr'ī) or -sauri (-sōr'ī). A book of selected words or concepts, as a specialized vocabulary for music, medicine, or the like. 2. A book of synonyms. [Latin *thesaurus*, TREASURE.]

these. Plural of *this*.

Thes-se-us (thēs'sē-əs, -syōōs'). Greek Mythology. A hero of Attica who slew the Minotaur and conquered the Amazonians; married their queen. —*Thes-se'an* (thī-sē'an) *adj.*

the-sis (thēs'īs) *n.*, *pl.* -ses (-sēz'). 1. A proposition advanced by a candidate for an academic degree, maintained by argument. 2. A dissertation advancing a particular point of view as a result of research, especially one put forth for the sake of argument, to be accepted without proof. 3. The first stage of a hypothesis. 4. *Prosody.* The unstressed part of a foot. Compare *thesis*. 5. *Music.* The accented section of a measure. Compare *thesis*. [Late Latin, from Greek, a placing, a laying down, affirmation, from *tithe-nai*, to put, place. See *the-* in Appendix.*]

Thes-pi-an (thēs'pē-an) *adj.* 1. Of or pertaining to the actor or actress. 2. Often small *t* of or pertaining to drama; dramatic.

thes-pi-an. An actor or actress.

Thes-pis (thēs'pīs). Greek poet of the sixth century B.C., reputed originator of tragic drama.

Thess. Thessalonians (New Testament).

Thes-sa-lo-ni-an (thēs'sā-lō'nē-an) *n.* A native or inhabitant of ancient Thessalonica or modern Salonika. —*adj.* Of or pertaining to ancient Thessalonica or modern Salonika.

Thes-sa-lo-ni-ans (thēs'sā-lō'nē-anz) *n.* Plural in form, with a singular verb. *Abbr.* *Thess.* Either of two books of the New Testament consisting of Epistles from the Apostle Paul to the Christians of Thessalonica.

Thes-sa-lo-ni-ca. The ancient name for Salonika.

Thes-sa-ly (thēs'sā-lē). *Modern Greek* *Thes-sa-lī-a* (thēs'sā-lī-ya). A division of Greece, occupying 5,907 square miles, the central part of the country along the Aegean Sea. Population, 698,000. Chief city, Larissa. —*Thes-sa-li-an* *adj.*

the-ta (thā'tā, thē') *n.* The eighth letter in the Greek alphabet, written Θ, θ. Transliterated in English as *th*. See *theta*.

the-tic (thē'tīk, thē'tīk) *adj.* Also *thet-i-cal* (thēt'ī-kāl). 1. *Prosody.* Beginning with, constituting, or relating to a thesis. 2. Presented dogmatically; arbitrarily pronounced. [Greek *thetikos*, fit for placing, from *thēto*, placed, *tithe-nai*, to place. See *the-* in Appendix.*] —*thet-i-cal-ly adv.*

Thet-is (thē'tīs). Greek Mythology. One of the Nereids, daughter of Peleus and mother of Achilles.

the-ur-gy (thē'ūr-jē) *n.*, *pl.* -gies. 1. Divine or supernatural intervention in the affairs of man. 2. The performance of miracles with supernatural assistance. 3. Magic performed supposedly with aid of beneficent spirits, as practiced by the Platonists. [Late Latin *theurgia*, from Greek *theourgia*, mental rite, "mystery": THEO- + -URGY.] —*the-ur-gi-cal adj.* —*the-ur-gi-cal-ly adv.* —*the-ur-gi-cal-ly adv.*

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ā pat/ā pay/ār care/ā father/b bib/ch church/d deed/ē pet/ē be/f tife/g gag/h hat/hw which/i pit/i pie/ir pier/j judge/k needle/m mum/n no, sudden/ng thing/ō pot/ō toe/ō paw, for/oi noise/ou out/ōō took/ōō boot/p pop/r roar/s sauce/sh